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DE RUEHGZ #0160/01 0770846  
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FM AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6977  
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE  
RUCNARFC/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE  
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC  
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP/ISA/AP//  
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC//J2/J3/J5//  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI//J00/J2/J3/J5//  
RUEORDA/DIRAFMIC FT DETRICK MD//MA-1A//

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 GUANGZHOU 000160

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/CM, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP, AIAG, OES/IHA, MED  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE AND GH  
CDC FOR OGHA AND DIV-FLU  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP  
HHS PASS TO FIC/NIH  
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS (OSTA AND OCRA), FSIS  
BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC, USAID  
BEIJING FOR HHS HEALTH ATTACHE AND RMO  
PHNOM PENH FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR  
VIENTIANE FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [EAGR](#) [PINR](#) [KFLU](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: Dead birds in Guangzhou confirmed positive for H5N1 virus,  
avian influenza

REF: A. Guangzhou 0154

11. (U) Summary: The National Influenza Reference Laboratory has confirmed that the March 13 death of 114 chickens in a Guangzhou poultry market was the result of the H5N1 virus (avian influenza). Guangdong authorities have increased disinfection and monitoring efforts. The infected birds have been traced to an unlicensed wholesale poultry market in Foshan, which has subsequently culled 2,000 birds, tested an additional 82,000 plus, and halted market operations. No additional cases of H5N1 infection have been reported. End Summary.

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Avian Influenza Confirmed  
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12. (U) During a March 13 incident, in a Guangzhou poultry market, a total of 114 birds died from unknown causes. Authorities ordered an additional 518 to be culled, one of several steps exercised as part of the provincial government's prevention and response plan, which is activated when avian influenza is suspected (ref. A). On March 16, following tests conducted by the National Avian Influenza Reference Laboratory (located in Harbin) on poultry samples collected from the Guangzhou market, the Guangdong Ministry of Agriculture confirmed that the deaths were a result of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) of the H5N1 subtype. As part of the provincial response plan, disinfection and monitoring efforts have been strengthened for poultry markets located within a 3-km radius of the infection site. Additionally, market sellers who were in close contact with the infected poultry remain under medical observation. The Guangdong HPAI Command Center has circulated a memo urging local government to be vigilant in their 100 percent vaccination policy, and in their promotion of quarantine certificates. No additional AI-related poultry deaths have been reported.

¶3. (U) Also, in an unrelated case, authorities have confirmed that the death of more than 3,000 birds in Foshan City's Tingbu Village (ref. A), located 2 hours southwest of Guangzhou, can be attributed to the overuse of antibiotics, not to the H5N1 virus. According to investigations conducted by the Foshan Veterinary Section, and the Animal Disease Prevention and Control Center, a farmer previously purchased the antibiotic Gentamicin, used to treat bacterial infections, and subsequently administered a dosage three-times the normal level to his farm's poultry. Additionally, he mixed the antibiotics into the poultry feed, instead of properly administering the drugs into the water. As a result, many of his birds died.

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Contaminated Supply  
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¶4. (SBU) Since March 13, stalls in Guangzhou's Jinhua Xin Market have been disinfected daily, and remain banned from selling poultry at this time. Stalls selling other goods in the market are operating as normal. Following provincial government investigations into the origination point of the infected poultry, authorities have discovered that the dead chickens were obtained from an unlicensed wholesale market, Sanniao market, located in Foshan City's Nanhai district. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, 2,000 birds in the wholesale market were culled as a precautionary measure. Additional reports indicate that more than 82,000 of the wholesale market's birds tested negative for the H5N1 virus, though this claim has yet to be confirmed. The wholesale market purchases its poultry supply from Beiliu, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. On March 14, local officials suspended the wholesale market's operations for operating without a license.

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¶5. (U) This cable was coordinated with Embassy Beijing.

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